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BEAUTIFUL NATIVE PLANTS

FROM THE
HIGH PLAINS, BADLANDS
AND BLACK HILLS

1938



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PRAIRIE GEM RANCH

Smithwick, South Dakota

Member American Rock Garden Society

FOREWORD

From here and there over the country, and as far as England, come expressions of pleasure in the flowering plants that have been sent from the Great Plains. These plants are, doubtless, somewhat in a class by themselves, floriferous, colorful, often brilliant, dwarfed by their environment, but facing harsh conditions with a gay front.

The Great Plains, that vast prairie country bordering the Rocky Mountains on their eastern flank, from well up in Saskatchewan and Alberta to near the Mexican border in west Texas and New Mexico, are of middle elevation, 1800 to 7000 feet, and provide characteristic features of free-moving atmosphere, intense sun, moisture often deficient and rarely in excess, together with temperatures that range from very high to very low throughout practically the whole region; factors that have had a distinct effect on the wonderfully varied plant habitants, making them in many ways comparable to the plants of high alpine origin.

The majority of the selected kinds offered to the public in the following lists of thoroughly hardy perennials, bulbs, and cacti, are naturally of splendid garden habit, and with a little kindly thought given their average liking for lean soil, exposure to sunshine, and good drainage, they readily adopt the garden manner.

The plant names used are in accordance with HORTUS so far as practicable.

TERMS

It is our purpose and interest to have the plants that go out from Prairie Gem Ranch live and grow in your garden. As with the creeping Phloxes, many kinds that would be impossible in old, woody specimens, are relatively easy in small plants with young, vigorous roots. In every instance we strive to supply the plant, large or small, that will best meet your reasonable expectation.

Seeds of many kinds will be available in autumn. Requests for the seed list will be appreciated. Also requests for rare plants not listed.

All prices include prepaid delivery; it simplifies ordering and service. Orders of less than one dollar are not solicited.

Please feel as free in making criticisms and complaints as in reporting your successes. Adjustments are made graciously.

Actinea (Tetraneuris) simplex An excellent golden Daisy, flowers an inch to an inch and a half wide, carried 4 to 8 inches above the narrow basal leaves, May to July or later. Beautiful autumn rosettes. 20c; doz. \$2.00.

Anemone patens nuttalliana (Pulsatilla ludoviciana) American Pasque, state flower of South Dakota. Furry buds open into large starry chalices of delicate lavender with glowing yellow centers, March to May. 3 to 6 inches. Attractive divided leaves and silvery brownish seed heads follow. Full sun or much

shade, no permanent wet at the roots. 35c; 3, 90c.

Antennaria aprica One of the delightful mat-formers called Pussy-toes, Ladies' tobacco, etc. Broad little leaves of silvery olive in mats an inch high. The flowers are but furry heads, 4 inches high. Evergreen. 20c; doz., \$2.00.

A. campestris Distinct, with leaves of rich dark green above, white velvet beneath. Distinct also with its tiny white rayed blossoms with old gold disk. 25c; doz. \$2.50.

A. microphylla A rare plant of bluish silver, retaining its clear color in winter, with broadly spatulate little leaves of attractive pattern; white furry heads at 8 inches. 35c; doz. \$3.00.

Artemisia frigida A low, feathery, silvery, tufted Sage of delightful fragrance. Arching spikes of tiny bells, August. 25c; 3, 60c.

Asclepias pumila The Little Milkweed, with closely set linear leaves and terminal umbels of white, cream or purplish pink, in July. 4 to 8 inches. Not seriously weedy. 20c; 3, 45c.

Aster Kumleini Prairie Gem Blue, dense sheets of blue and gold, September. Will more than bear comparison with other low Asters of violet blue color. 20c.

A. kumleini The rose pink form, slightly taller, slightly later. 20c.

A. kumleini A silver blue with long lacy rays, of our own origination. Lovely effect. 35c. One each of the much admired Kumlein Asters, 60c.

A. meritus Rare species of pinkish violet, old gold centered flowers in broad flat-topped corymbs, July, August. 8 to 12 inches. Excellent broad oval leaves. 40c; 3, \$1.00.

A. ptarmicoides (Unamia alba) Single Asters of fine white in broad corymbs, the creamy white disks creating a chaste appearance and distinct value. July, September. 12 inches. Does not spread. 30c; 3, 75c.

Astragalus alpinus Most beautiful of dark green pinnate leaves, and numerous heads, white shaded blue, at 5 inches, June, July. Of ground cover habit. 30c; doz. \$2.50.

A. goniatus Feathery pinnate leaves, numerous handsome heads of clear lavender touched with bright purple, June, August. Ground cover, spreading freely, worth confining. 40c; doz. \$3.50.

A. (Xylophacos) missouriensis Sheep Pod. Showy racemes of magenta-purple Pea blossoms, May, June, above gray pinnate leaves. Height 4 inches, spread to 16. 30c; 3, 75c.

Others of the Astragalus family, see **Homalobus**, **Orophaca**, **Oxytropis**.

Campanula petiolata The large flowered Western Harebell, wonderfully free blooming, June, September, 8 to 12 inches. 30c; 3, 85c.

Cerastium strictum Abundant white flowers, to 8 inches, from a low mat of rich green, May, July. Nearly evergreen ground cover for shade. 15c; doz. \$1.00.

Clematis (Viorna) scotti Leatherflower. Blue to purple, nodding, urn Clematis with glaucous foliage. May, June, 10 inches. Conspicuous silky, tawny seed plumes. 50c; 3, \$1.35.

C. (Atragene) tenuiloba "Fairies-Bower." Introduced last year, a 6 to 10 inch Clematis of high merit. Much divided leaves of light green, beautiful nodding flowers of deep blue-purple. See picture on cover. \$1.00; 3, \$2.50.

Dalea (Parosela) enneandra A plant that is different. Light and airy enough for any company, its one to several slender arching stems rise to 24 inches or more and end in spreading, swaying racemes of silvery calyces and whitish blossoms. Blossom effect, June, August. Always an attractive novelty. 30c; 3, 75c.

Delphineum bicolor Flowers of richest deep blue. June. Usually 12 inches or less. 30c; 3, 75c.

Dodecatheon pauciflorum Dwarf Shooting Star. Bears its charming and abundant flowers of bright rose and gold in May and June, at 8 to 10 inches. Rich soil, sun or light shade, ordinary moisture. 30c; 3, 85c; doz. \$3.00.

Echinacea angustifolia The lower Cone Flower, a great pink—not purple—Daisy, with mahogany center. Strikingly beautiful. 10 to 14 inches. June, July. 30c; 3, 75c.

Erigeron caespitosus New. A broader-rayed Daisy than most, and a purer white. July. 10 inches. 50c; 3, \$1.35.

E. canus Dainty narrow-rayed Daisy, or Fleabane, of the rocky open places. Flowers an inch wide, white, leaves grayish, 10 inches. June. 20c; 3, 50c.

E. commixtus Similar to *flagellaris* in size and habit, but making a ground cover of more attractive texture with its greener leaves, broader and neatly three-lobed at the tip. New. 50c; doz. \$3.00.

E. flagellaris An appealing small white Daisy, forming a delicate ground cover by rooting down at the ends of low, lateral branches. In bloom more or less from June to October. 25c; doz. \$2.00.

E. glabellus Pale lavender Daisies, with as many as five flowers to the 10 or 12 inch stem, above crowded leaves of glossy green. Evergreen. 35c; 3, 90c.

Eriogonum flavum Many rounded umbels of soft yellow, fuzzy with stamens, on 4 to 12 inch scapes, above green velvet rosettes, or in old plants, 10 inch mats. One of the most distinct and beautiful habitants of the hot, limestone outcrops. 50c; 3, \$1.35.

Galium boreale Worthy of extensive use in partly shady places. The tiny, four petaled flowers in close racemes accent vertical lines. Foliage also fine. 12 inches or so. June, July. 20c; 3, 50c.

Galpinsia, see **Oenothera**.

Gutierrezia sarothrae Broom Bush. Related to the Goldenrods but grows into a hemisphere of innumerable slender stems and minute leaves of vivid green, which turns to brassy yellow in blossom time, September. 10 or 12 inches. 25c; 3, 65c.

Hedeoma camporum Plant this perennial Pennyroyal for its delectable and satisfying fragrance, a rounded, 8 inch bushlet, with many tiny pink-lavender blossoms, June, on. Or, plant many of them and dry for a delicious breakfast cup. 40c; 3, \$1.00; doz. \$2.50.

Homalobus (Astragalus) caespitosus Of distinct character and irresistible charm, forming a cushion of small sharp leaves less than 2 inches high, as much as 8 inches wide, offering through May a profusion of little "Clover" blossoms, violet to purple with white-tipped wings. Small plants are essential. 30c; doz. \$3.

Lathyrus incanus (ornatus) Conspicuous and beautiful, the Sand Peas bear large two-toned blossoms of rose and pale pink, in clusters of two to seven, in May. 4 to 10 inches. A colony plant of the sand dunes. 25c; doz. \$2.50.

L. ornatus (stipulaceus) Like incanus but glabrous, and the banner which carries the rose color has a tinge more of red and less of lavender. Rare in this locality. 30c; doz. \$3.00.

Lesquerella spatulata Bladderpod. An attractive bouquet of brightest yellow, small crucifer blossoms, May, July. Height 4 inches, spread, 10. Gray green winter rosettes. 20c; 3, 50c.

Leucocrinum montanum Sand Lily, Bethlehem Star. Deliciously fragrant, stemless little Lilies of waxy white in a tuft of grassy leaves. April, May. Plant with base of pip two inches deep, in fine gravel with little soil. 25c; doz. \$2.00.

Liatris ligulistylis Blazing Star. Stems carry seven to twelve, inch wide, fluffy heads of lovely clear purple. Basal leaves, green, oblanceolate. One to several stems, 18 inches or so. July, August. 40c; 3, \$1.00.

L. punctata Dwarf Blazing Star. Fluffy spikes of fine, transparent purple, 8 to 14 inches, August. Basal leaves, lance-linear, dark green. 30c; 3, 75c.

Lithofragma (Tellima) parviflora Woodland Star, Fringe-cup. Laciniated, five-petaled stars of purest white, starting at 4 inches or so and growing up to 12, May, June. Fine for interplanting in rich soil, shade or sun. Dormant soon after flowering. 3, 35c; doz. \$1.25.

Lithospermum linearifolium Puccoon. Brilliant yet soft yellow ruffled trumpets, one-half inch wide, May. Always a splendid show. 6 to 12 inches. 30c; 3, 75c.

Malvastrum (Sphaeralcea) coccinea Flame Mallow. Short spires of one-inch Mallow blossoms of flame-scarlet, above unique deeply cut grayish leaves, June and later, 4 to 10 inches. Lean gravel-filled soil. 25c; 3, 65c.

Meriolix, see *Oenothera*.

Mertensia lanceolata An easy one of the refined, western, dwarf Bluebells. 10 inches. Arching stems with clusters of fine blue in April grow into panicles of lighter blue in June, leaves glaucous. Non-spreading. Dormant, mid-summer. 30c; 3, 75c; doz. \$2.80.

M. linearis New. Similar to lanceolata but with dark leaves and glossy dark blue throats to the corollas. 50c; 3, \$1.35.

Nothocalais ("Agoseris") cuspidata A rich textured golden flower of April and May, of Dandelion type but flatter, two inches wide. Leaves broadly grasslike, white margined. Dormant in summer. 2 to 6 inches. 40c; 3, \$1.

Oenothera (Pachylophus) caespitosa Stemless Evening Primrose, "Gumbo Lily." 4 inch, snowy, fragrant blossoms among lanceolate glossy leaves, May to August. Must have good drainage, perhaps lime. 25c; 3, 65c.

O. (Galpinsia) lavandulaefolia A lovely and free flowering yellow Evening Primrose. The two-inch, crinkly blossoms of clear rich color remain open all day, and from June to frost it is one of the jewels of the plains. 4 to 8 inches. Tiny grayish leaves. 40c; 3, \$1.00.

O. (Meriolix) serrulata Small Evening Primroses of bright lemon yellow. Open through the day, and in bloom from May to August. Half shrubby, 8 to 10 inches. 30c; 3, 75c.

Oreocarya glomerata Fine spikes of white Forget-me-nots that broaden into panicles with six weeks' blooming. 20c; 3, 50c.

Orophaca (Astragalus) caespitosa Companion to Homalobus, its pillows of silvery triparted leaves are crowded in April and May with a snow of stemless blossoms. 30c; 3, 75c.

O. tridactylica Of the appearance of caespitosa in the plant but with very pleasing flowers of magenta-shaded lavender, borne just above the leaves. (Formerly listed as *O. sericea*, which is similar in color.) Very rare. 50c; 3, \$1.20.

Oxytropis lamberti Loco. Many showy racemes of rich toned Pea blossoms, red-purple to blue, from light to dark, 12 inches. June. Silvery pinnate leaves at the ground. Fine singly or en masse. 30c; doz. \$3.00.

Parosela, see **Dalea**.

Pachylophus, see **Oenothera**.

Pentstemon The Pentstemons of the plains are among the largest flowered and most showy, and in their native lean soils, with moderate moisture and excellent subdrainage, they contradict their reputation for impermanence. Some are sand hills plants. Use sand freely with all.

P. albidus Close spires of large white blossoms, May, June, to 14 inches. 20c; 3, 50c.

P. angustifolius Brilliant azure, with glaucous stems and leaves, this flower has a wonderful appeal. June. 12 inches. 25c; 3, 65c.

P. eriantherus Handsome spires of large, warm lavender blossoms with prominent gold-hairy

tongues. Foliage dark, hairy. June. 8 to 12 inches. Lime and a portion of clay may be needed. 25c; 3, 65c.

P. glaber A fine dark blue, often touched with purple. June, July, and again if cut back. Usually 18 or 20 inches. Very adaptable. 30c; 3, 75c.

P. gracilis Graceful, small flowered, amethyst spikes to 12 inches. June, July. 30c; 3, 75c.

Petalostemon purpureus Prairie Clover. Spreading stems with many long heads of purple-red, dotted with orange stamens. Fragrant, much admired. June, July. Dry position, sandy. 30c; 3, 75c.

P. villosus Hairy Prairie Clover. All parts of the plant a velvety gray green, the beautiful flowers a soft silvery rose, July, September. Deep sand. 35c; 3, 90c.

Phlox alyssifolia Lavender pink to bright pink, the flowers often an inch in diameter, carpeting the mats of grayish, white margined leaves, and filling the garden with delicious scent. May, June, 5 inches. Spreads slowly. Easy to establish in this climate, worth any effort. 30c; doz. \$3.00.

P. andicola The large blossomed white Phlox of the high prairies, needle leaves in open arrangement. April through June, 4 inches. Delicate fragrance. 20c; doz. \$2.00.

P. hoodi A lovely mite with half-inch or smaller white flowers starring its mossy green mats, April, May. 2 inches. The plains Phloxes delight in a gravelly or rocky footing, this one especially. 30c; doz. \$3.00.

Sideranthus spinulosus Solid masses of inch wide Golden Asters, September, October. 6 inches. Plant low branching, spreading, leaves finely divided, frosty. Excellent at all times. 30c; 3, 75c.

Solidago mollis A handsome low Goldenrod, not aggressive, worth a trial. Very bright roundish heads, September. Broad gray green leaves. 8 to 12 inches. 25c; 3, 65c.

Thermopsis rhombifolia Golden Pea. Large yellow flowers in broad, close racemes, beautiful and unusual, May. 6 to 12 inches. Forms loose colonies. 30c; 3, 75c.

Townsendia exscapa Easter Daisy. Many brilliant pinkish Daisies on a 2 inch tuft of narrow, evergreen leaves, April, May. This gem is difficult to keep in moist climates. The driest possible soil and situation should prove effective. 25c; 3, 65c.

T. sericea Smaller than exscapa in every way, 3 to 4 weeks earlier. More numerous flowers, white or delicate pink. 25c; 3, 65c.

Tradescantia bracteata This highly satisfactory dwarf Spiderwort is remarkable for its color range, deep blue, purple, heliotrope, sky blue, lavender, bright rose. Starts blooming at 4 inches and hardly exceeds 10, June, on. 20c each; doz. in six or more colors, \$2.00.

T. occidentalis Blue flowered, with blue-green stems and leaves. Distinct upright habit, to 12 inches, long season. 20c; doz. \$1.60.

Verbena bipinnatifida Wide heads of deep lavender constantly from May to October. Height 3 to 6 inches, spread to 20 or more. 30c; 3, 75c.

Viola nephrophylla One of the best of the blues, April, May. 20c; 3, 50c.

V. nuttalli The brilliant yellow Violet of the dry open prairies. Profusely blooming, April through May. 20c; 3, 50c; doz. \$1.80.

BULBS—for Delivery October 1st

Allium textile (reticulatum) Pretty, when the clustered bulbs flaunt their broad umbels of green ribbed, white stars, May. 8 inches. Doz. 35c.

Calochortus gunnisoni Mariposa Tulip. A very lovely white chalice with clusters of greenish hairs on the lower part of the petal. July. Few long grassy leaves. Doz. \$1.00; 100, \$7.50.

C. nuttalli This Mariposa is the Sego Lily, Utah's state flower, a wonder of white with gold and maroon markings, leaves glaucous. June. Sensitive like most Calochorti to excess moisture, these plains species are inured to extreme cold, and alternate freezing and thawing means nothing at all to them. Doz. 85c; 100, \$6.50.

Zygadenus (Toxicoscordion) gramineum False Camas. Crowded creamy stars with golden stamens on an erect spike, 8 to 16 inches. Grassy basal leaves. Doz. 60c; 100, \$4.50.

CACTI—Very Hardy Sorts

For a soil to please all of them use a little leafmold or good loam with much sand and gravel, and raise the bed a little, particularly for missouriensis and viridiflora. Cacti should be dry and shrunken to go into the winter. All are spring blooming. Larger, or group specimens at double the quotation.

Coryphantha (Mamillaria) vivipara Ball, to 3 inches or more, showy carmine flowers, June. 30c; 3, 75c.

Echinocereus viridiflorus Ball-shaped to cylindric, not often over 2 inches high, rarely 4. Bright colored spines, inch and a half glossy blossoms, June. 25c; 3, 60c.

Neobesseya (Mamillaria) missouriensis Ball, rarely attaining 2 inches. One inch to inch and a half, pale orange flowers, crimson fruits. 35c; 3, 80c.

Opuntia fragilis Dwarf Pricky Pear. 2 inch sections, silky, 2 inch, yellow flowers. 25c.

O. polyacantha Very spiny 4 inch, or larger, sections, 4 inch silken yellow flowers. 25c.

O. rhodantha Like polyacantha in the plant, the abundant flowers are of the most lovely carmine rose silk. 40c.

O. tortispina (?) (humifusa) Large dark green sections, often 5 to 6 inches long, largest silken yellow flowers with red filaments, latest to bloom, June. Ripe "pears" dark red. 25c.